

## Newar Scholars and Tibetan Buddhists

– Contribution in the Development of Scholastic Buddhism in Tibet

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《 Abstract 》

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Nepal's role in the expansion of Mahayana Buddhism beyond the Himalaya is very significant. Nepal became the center of Mahayana Buddhism after the Muslim invasion of Nalanda Mahavihara in the 1199 A.D., which she maintained almost for 300 years. During this period, Nepal had produced a large number of profound Buddhist scholars. Most of them were the teachers of eminent Tibetan Buddhists. Some of the Nepalese Gurus also has continued lineage in Tibet until now. During that time, every Tibetan had desire to go to Nepal for higher Buddhist learning. As a matter of fact, many Tibetans made arduous journey across the Himalaya to fulfill the dream. Tibetan studied various forms of tantra, precepts, logic, doctrine, Sutra, Sadhana, Doha, Charyagiti, meditation etc. under direct supervision of Nepalese teachers. Great Tibetan scholars such as Marpa, Rwa Lo, Chag Lo, Khon phu ba, Klog Lo, Gos Lo, and others were the product of Nepal's scholarly tradition. They have significant place in the history of Tibet. Nepalese scholars also frequently visited Tibet where they taught Buddhism in various monasteries. They also had major role in propagating tantra in Tibet. Tibetans firmly believe that it is not possible to attain enlightenment without practicing tantra. The contribution of Nepalese scholars was so profound that Tibet produced many eminent scholars who developed scholastic tradition in Tibet. But after 14th century, Nepal's scholarly tradition ceased to continue. Then after, Tibetans started to call them 'the dull'.

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※**Key words:** Buddhism, Mahayana, Tantra, Tibetan, Newar, Nepalese, Scholarship.

불교사상, 대승불교, 밀교, 티벳불교, 수도원, 목상, 구루.

## I . Background

The history of Buddhism and Buddhist scholastic activities in Nepal was developed during the medieval times. The foundation of Newar Buddhist scholarship was laid upon during the ancient times. Buddhism was so popular since the ancient times that Nepal produced a large number of prominent scholars from among the Buddhist Newars. They mastered in different branches of Buddhism. Many Newar Buddhist scholars developed expertise to the extent that they became famous far and wide. They developed the tradition of scholarship in Nepal. Most of the Nepalese scholars were very famous among the Tibetans. Many learned Tibetan scholars were trained under the Nepalese Pandits. Great Tibetan scholars such as Marpa Dopa, Rwa Lotsaba, (Vajrakirti), Chag Lotsaba, Khon-phu-ba, Klog Lotsaba, Byun gnas-rgyal mtshan, Gos Lotsaba, Bari Lotsaba and many others studied Buddhism under Newar Pandits. They mainly focused on higher tantras.

No doubt that Newar scholars rendered invaluable services in the study and practice of Buddhism. Their contribution in Tibetan Buddhism is noteworthy. Nepal always remained a place of Buddhist learning for Tibetans. Many Tibetans made arduous journey across the Himalaya without taking notice of troubles. The Nepalese scholars taught them the tradition of various Buddhist tantras such as Kriya, Charya, Yoga and Anuttara Yoga tantra. However, they mainly concentrated to learn theoretical as well as the practical aspects of the higher form of Buddhist tantra.

In fact, the contribution of Nepalese scholars played important role in the making of Tibetan scholastic tradition. Therefore, Nepalese scholars remained always very prominent for them. Buddhist manuscripts written in the Ranjana, Bhujimola, Kutila and Pracalit Newari scripts preserved in various Tibetan monasteries proves the popularity of Nepalese Buddhist scholars in Tibet. Not only this, the Newar Buddhist art has equally influenced Tibetan Buddhism.

It is noteworthy that popularity of Mahayana doctrine started the tradition of studying Sanskrit in Nepal. Historians assume the date of arrival of Mahayana creeds in Nepal before 4th Century.<sup>1)</sup> However, during the ancient

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1) Surya Vikram Jnavali, 2019, *《Nepal Upatyakako Madhyakalin Itiha, (Medieval History of Nepal Valley)》*, Kathmandu: Royal Nepal Academy, p.266.

times, education was not within the grip of ordinary people.

History has traced out Buddhist scholars right since 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. The first among the great scholars was Buddhahadra, who translated several Buddhist texts into Chinese.<sup>2)</sup> His contribution in China as a Buddhist scholar is of immense significance.

A brief discussion on scholarly activities of Newar as well as the Tibetan Buddhists helps to analyse the Buddhist scholastic tradition of Nepal. Contemporary situation was very favourable for the growth of Buddhist scholarship in Nepal. Therefore, activities of both the Indian and Tibetan scholars further contributed to develop Newar Buddhist scholarship.

## II. Newar Gurus and Tibetan Scholarship

Silamanju, a noted scholar went to Tibet in the 7th century. He helped Thonmi Sambhota to translate Sanskrit Buddhist texts into Tibetan.<sup>3)</sup> Ratnamegha Sutra is one of the texts for which Silamanju assisted the Tibetan translator to translate into Tibetan. However, he is not mentioned in the Tibetan sources such as Debther Ngon-po. But other historical sources prove his presence in Tibet in the capacity of a Buddhist scholar.

Advayavajra was a great Buddhist scholar from Kapilvastu. He taught Buddhist precepts to Tibetan Siddha Khyun Po rnal byor. Nepalese scholar Vagisvarakirti (Pham thin pa) also trained the latter in Samvaramula tantra (Abhidhanottaranatanama). He also studied Buddhism under the guidance of Pandit Vasumati.<sup>4)</sup>

Advayavajra was born in a Brahmin family at Jhotakarani near Kapilvastu. He studied logical treatises of Dignaga and Dharmakirti, middle way of Nagarjuna and doctrinal aspect of Prajnaparamita under Guru Naropa at Vikramsila and Vijnanavada and Nirakaravyavastha under Mahasiddha

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2) Samuel Beal has mentioned titles of other translations in his *《Catalogue of the Chinese Tripitaka》*.

3) Jnavali, Op cit, p.267; Alka Ctopadhyaya, *《Atisa and Tibet- Life and Works of Dipankara Sri Jnan》*, New Delhi: Motilal Benarsi Das, 1991, p.204.

4) George N. Roerich, *《The Blue Anna》*, Delhi: Motilal Benarsi Das, 1971, p.9.

Ratnakarsanti. The Kagyud-pa tradition of Tibet describes that he also debated with Naropa. It mentions -

After completing the study of grammar he debated with Naropa, who was victorious. So, he served that teacher. After completing the study of Brahmanical rules and observances, he took ordination under Ratnakarasanti. He became known as Maitri - the loving one. He was unmatched in his erudition of the given fields of learning.<sup>5)</sup>

He was initiated in Samvara and Hevajra tantra. He studied philosophy, logic, Sutra, Abhidharma, Vinaya, and tantra. He also studied Tantrachintamani and Yogacara philosophy. Guru Savaripa who taught him Pancakrama and Caturmudra initiated him in tantra.

Advayavajra composed several texts, which made him immortal as a Buddhist scholar. His greatest contributions were - Advayavajra Sangraha, Abodhabodhaka, Guru Maitrigitika, Caturmudropadesa, Cittamatra-drishti, Dohatvanidhitattvapadesa and Caturvajragitika. Advayavajra Sangraha itself is comprised of twenty-one short works.<sup>6)</sup> He was also known as Avadhutipa. He wrote famous Sadhanas (evocation) along with other Buddhist texts. His famous Sadhanas are Simhanada, Vajravarahi and Saptak-shara. He is also mentioned in the Sadhana written by Lalitagupta who calls himself as his disciple.<sup>7)</sup> Advayavajra has been considered a great scholar. He had intuitive vision of things. Following the instructions of his Guru, he undertook the career of teaching Buddhism. Guru Marpa was his disciple. His other famous disciples were Sahajavajra, Sunyatasamadhi, Ramapala and Vajrapani. It is said that he had discovered two texts of Mahayana Uttara Tantra Sastra and Dharmadharmatavibhanga, which he taught to Anandakirti.<sup>8)</sup> He was such a great scholar that Tara Nath has compared him with Siddha Naropa.

Advayavajra not only produced valuable texts, he equally contributed in the

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5) Min Bahadur Sakya, *Life and Teachings of Nepalese Siddha Advayavajra*, *Buddhist Himalay Vol. V*, Nos. 1 & 2, 1993, pp.1-2.

6) Hara Prasad atri (ed.), *Advayavajra Sangraha*, Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1927.

7) Benoytos Bhtaarya (ed.), *Sadhanamal, Vol. II*, Baroda: Oriental Institute pp.XCI-XCIV, 1968,

8) Roerich, Op cit, p.347.

development of Tibetan Buddhist literature by translating Buddhist texts into Tibetan. In Tengyur collection, he is referred to as an author or a translator of more than fifty Buddhist texts.<sup>9)</sup> In addition to it, Advayavajra wrote many Charya songs as well.<sup>10)</sup>

Guru Padmasambhava was able to overcome all obstacles that were against Buddhism in Tibet. His attempts made Buddhism very popular in Tibet. As a matter of fact, Tibetans became eager to learn Buddhism and started to go Nepal for higher learning. This tradition shows that Nepal was already exposed to Buddhist scholarship right in the 5th century. The popularity of Vajrayana Buddhism in the 9th century in Tibet and expertise of Newar scholars in tantric practices brought them closer to Nepal. Tibetans were benefited from it. Nepalese scholarship was further strengthened by their presence in Nepal.

The understanding of Buddhist tantra, logic, philosophy and precepts made Newar Buddhists very popular. Prominent tantric teachers of India were affiliated to Vikramsila Mahavihara. The affiliation of eminent scholars like Jnanapada, Dipankarabhadra, Jayabhadra, Sridhar, Bhavabhadra, Bhavyakirti, Lilavajra, Durjaya-candra, Samayavajra, Tathagatarakshita and Bodhibhadra made it worthy and very famous.<sup>11)</sup>

Mahapandit Atisa Dipankara Sri Jnana came to Nepal on his way to Tibet in the eleventh century. He spent almost a year in Nepal. Many monks were ordained at the new Vihara in the presence of Atisa. Lotsaba Nag tsho Tshul-Khring-rGyal-ba (Jayasila) who accompanied Atisa in Nepal held the view that the style of studying doctrine at Tham Bahi was very good.<sup>12)</sup> He later translated Buddhist texts assisted by Pandit Santibhadra of Nepal.<sup>13)</sup>

Atisa had profound impact on Newar Buddhist monasticism. His book

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9) For Translation works of Advayavajra see Tarthang Tulku, *《Guide to the Nyingma Edition of the De-dge-bKangyur bsTan-gyu》*, Berkeley: Dharma Publishing, 1980, pp.373, pp.1243-1244, p.1308, p.1328, p.1483, pp.1485-1487, pp.2076-2105, pp.2233-2236, pp.2239-2246, pp.2248-2251 and pp.2295-2297.

10) Sakya, Op cit, pp.8-10.

11) Debi Prasad Ctopadhyaya, *《Tara Nath's History of Buddhism in India》*, Simla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study, 1979, p.18.

12) Roerich, Op cit, p.247; Ctopadhyaya, Op cit, pp.320-491.

13) Roerich, Op cit, p.261.

Bodhipathapradipa finally led to cease the monastic practice in Newar Buddhism. However, Nepalese historians mistakenly pointed out social reforms of Jayasthiti Malla to transform celibate monkhood practice into ritual Buddhism. Atisa's interpretation of higher Yoga tantra practice by a monk has transformed celibate monasticism in Nepal.<sup>14)</sup>

Atisa had two famous Nepalese disciples named Anupamgupta (Gyod-pa gsan-ba) and Vairocana. Anupamgupta taught Sanskrit grammar to sKor-chum ba who was the disciple of Maitripa, an expert of Mahamudra. He also got lessons on profound meditation (sems-dzin) from Vairocana. sKor-chum came to Nepal at the age of 13 for higher Buddhist learning.

During this time, Siddha Naropa also came to Nepal along with his disciples to propagate tantra. Sometimes later, tantra took its route to Tibet. Nepalese scholars took active part in the propagation of tantra in Tibet. Tibetan scholars were influenced by the inquisition of Siddha Naropa. Later on, many Tibetan monks came to Nepal to study tantra under Naropa's Nepalese disciples. His prominent Nepalese disciples were Vagisvarakirti, Kanaksri and Mahakaruna. They became very famous in Tibet along with Atulyavajra and Lohan-rDorje. Dharmamati, Duskhorpa and Tham-Chun-pa, three brothers of Vagisvarakirti also became famous in Tibet. The three brothers were also the experts of Buddhist tantra. In fact, they had very good knowledge of Guhyasamaja tantra.

The other Vagisvarakirti (Naggi dhan phyu gragspa) was a famous scholar affiliated to Vikramsila Mahavihara. He was also highly respected in Tibet. He was a great scholar of Guhyasamaja system. Vagisvarakirti, a famous scholar from Vikramsila Mahavihara came to Nepal in the latter part of his life. He preached tantra in Nepal but he hardly preached any other aspect of the doctrine. As he had many consorts, most of the people in Nepal thought that he was incapable of maintaining the conduct of a monk. However, his contribution is invaluable. He built many centers to study Prajnaparamita, Guhyasamaja, Hevajra, Cakrasamvara tantra and Madhyamakapramana. He mastered in Vidyasamvara, Prajnaparamita, Sutralan-kara, Guhyasamaja,

14) Losang Norbu Sastri (tr.), *《Bodhipathapradipa Arya Dipankara Sri Jnana Viracit (The Bodhipathapradipa of Acharya Sri Jnana)》*, Sarnath: CIHTS, 1984, pp.65-66; Ctopadhyaya, Op cit, pp.525-535 and pp.545-549; Min Bahadur Sakya, *《A Historical Study of Monasticism in Newar Buddhism/Voice of Histor, Vol. XV, No. 1》*, June 2000, pp.65-80.

Hevajra, and Yamari tantra and Lankavatara Sutra.<sup>15)</sup> There was another Vagisvarakirti in Nepal who was also a very famous scholar of tantra. Even until now, the Tibetan pilgrims used to visit his birthplace in Phambi (present day Pharping in the South of Kathmandu). He taught tantra of Samvara cycle to Lotsaba kLog skya Ses-rab rtsegs.<sup>16)</sup> He also gave Samvara initiation to Malgyo Lotsaba bLo-gros-grags. Later, Malgyo Lotsaba came to Nepal and studied Samvara tantra thoroughly from Vagisvarakirti, Bodhibhadra (Byan-chub bzang po) and Mahakaruna.<sup>17)</sup> Vagisvarakirti also taught Kalacakra to Khon phu ba. He also taught Hevajra and other cycles of tantra according to the system of Naropa to Tibetan Pandit Byun-gnas-rgyal-mtshan, a descendent of Dharmaraja Khri-Sron-lde-btsan. The later composed a commentary on Hevajra tantra. Its study has been continued in the dPyal lineage in Tibet. Lama Tara Nath has mentioned Vagisvarakirti and his brothers who worked for the welfare of the living beings.<sup>18)</sup> In fact, he was an eminent tantric scholar of Nepal. His brothers were also famous Buddhist scholars. Bodhibhadra, one of his a brother was also a noted scholar who was trained in tantra under Siddha Naropa.

Kun-dga-rdorje, a Tibetan scholar was very learned in Nyingma doctrines and obtained the tantra of new class, which a Nepalese scholar named Kayasri handed down among his ancestors. Later he went to Nepal and obtained 13 special precepts from Punyakarabhadra (Hamu-dkarpo). He taught Vajravaraahi tantra to Lotsaba bLo-dan-ses-rab and sNubs-ston.<sup>19)</sup>

As noted earlier, Nepalese Buddhist scholarship was in its heydays for 300 years until 14<sup>th</sup> century. Later on, Tibetan historical writings started to

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15) Ctopadhyaya, Op, cit, pp.296-298.

16) Roerich, Op cit, p.206: p.227, pp.382-384, Nepalese Vagisvarakirti (Pham-thin-pa) should not be confused with Pandit Vagisvarakirti who was the Southern gatekeeper at Vikramsila. Our scholar lived in Pharping (Phampi) in Nepal. He was a famous tantric scholar. He is venerable to all the Tibetan Buddhists. As a matter of fact, Pharping, his hometown is a sacred place for them. His remains is said to have been buried at Lo-Chia-tun near Lan-Chou in Kansu (China) where he died at his return from the pilgrimage in Wu-tai-san.

17) Ibid, p.382.

18) Ibid, p.317.

19) Ibid, pp.395-396.

mention Nepalese Buddhists as *Bodo* (dull).<sup>20)</sup> Nepalese Buddhists did not pay due attention on the study and practice of tantra. On the other hand, penetration of Hinduism also affected to some extent. It finally led to degradation of Buddhist scholarship of Nepal. Consequently, Tibetans might have thought Nepalese as dull since they could not maintain the scholastic tradition. Even after 14<sup>th</sup> century, very few Newar scholars remained active in Tibet.

Lakshmikara, a Nepalese Buddhist scholar was very famous in Tibet in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. He also contributed to translate *Avadanakalpalata* of Kshemendra and other texts into Tibetan. He is said to have translated *Amarkosha*.<sup>21)</sup> rDorje-grags, a disciple of Ven. sGampo-pa heard the exposition of tantras including the Samvara tantra from Atuladas (Atulyadas) in Nepal in the 11<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>22)</sup>

The prominent Indian and Tibetan scholars frequently visited Nepal who had very good relations with the Newar scholars. Some of the prominent Indian scholars permanently resided in Nepal. Their presence inspired Newar Buddhists to study and practice Buddhism. Consequently, Nepal produced many eminent scholars. One famous scholar from India who resided in Nepal and contributed in the development of Buddhist scholarship was Vajrapani (Gyagar Phyang-na). While in India, he taught to Ma-Lotsaba, the reincarnation of Thon mi and Marpa Dopa.<sup>23)</sup> dPyal Byun-gnas rgyal mtshan, a famous Tibetan scholar also studied Buddhism with him in Nepal. According to the Buddhist tradition, a Tibetan scholar and a disciple of Siddha Tillipa was reborn as Sarvavid (Kunrig) in Jalandhar. After that he was again reborn as gZon-nu gsan-Chol in Nepal. He studied tantra. He believed that one is unable to attain Buddhahood without the practice of tantra. The practice of tantra depends solely on the teacher.<sup>24)</sup> He was prophesied to meet the incarnation of the Buddha in Tibet. He related the prophecy to his teacher Vajrapani. Therefore, he believed Vajrapani to be the incarnation of the

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20) Ibid, p.804.

21) Jnavali, Op cit, p.282.

22) Roerich, Op cit, pp.436-437.

23) Ibid, pp.219 and 384.

24) Ibid, p.521.



Buddha. In fact, the Indian scholar came to Nepal and practiced tantra. Later at the age of 50, he permanently settled at Patan (Yeran) in 1066 A.D.<sup>25)</sup> Tibetan scholars namely Brog-Jo-Sras and others visited Nepal to preach Buddhist doctrines. Vajrapani bestowed upon them the cycle of *Doha*, Sutra and twenty-seven mother tantras. He also bound them with four Mudras (Karma, Dharma, Maha and Samaya Mudra), theory accompanying tradition and reasoning, and meditation accompanied by experience etc. He taught several Buddhist texts known as the cycle of lesser texts. Vajrapani visited Tibet at the invitation of Tibetan scholar Brog-Jo-Sras. While at Chu-sgo, he preached Mahamudra (sTod-lugs) doctrine to other Tibetan scholars. Vajrapani originated the doctrine. His tradition in Tibet is known as the upper school of Mahamudra. Asu, a grandson of a priest of Bharo family in Nepal was also one of his famous disciples. After receiving precepts from Vajrapani, the Nepalese disciple realized the truth. Consequently, he became a monk. He also visited Tibet and taught the cycle of Vajravarahi tantra, Doha and Mahamudra to 10,000 monks.<sup>26)</sup> He had seven children in Tibet. His eldest son Grags pa Senge mastered on the theories of his father. He also became a reputed Buddhist Master in Tibet.

It is said that Vajrapani had amazing miraculous power. He possessed miraculous hidden precepts of Vajravarahi. In his old age, he gave ten texts of Mahamudra to Nag-po ser-dad mNaris. Those texts entitled Dohakoshanama Charyagiti, Kayakoshamrita Vajragiti. Vakkosarucirasva Vajragiti, Cittakoshaja Vajragiti, Kayavakcitta Manasakaranama, Bhavanakrama Satakanama, Arya Atajnananama Mahayana Sutra, Anavila Tantraraja, and Sri Anavilanama Tantrapanjika.

The later was the disciple of Gos-Lotsaba. The Lotsabas were very important in Tibetan Buddhist history. They were not only the translators but also great scholars of Buddhism. Chag-Lotsaba was also a great scholar who studied Buddhism under Ravindradeva and Ratnarakshita in Nepal.<sup>27)</sup>

Another noted Newa scholar was Atulyavajra (Mi-mnam rdo-rje). He was

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25) Ibid, p.856.

26) Ibid, p.860.

27) George N. Roerich, *Life of Dharmasvami*, Patna: K. P. Jaysawal Research Institute, 1959, P.54.

a descendant of Vagisvarakirti. He taught tantra to rNog-Lo-chen-Po, a Tibetan Tripitakadhara.<sup>28)</sup> Siddha Khyunpo-rnal-byor, who introduced Upayamarga of six doctrines founded by Niguma, a sister of Naropa, was well received by Atulyavajra. Mahakaruna, the famous Nepalese scholar was a disciple of Kanak Sri. Tantric Siddha Naropa had many eminent scholarly disciples such as Kanaksri, Prajnarakshita, Bodhibhadra, (Kha che Byan-chub-bzan-po) Vagisvarakirti and Pramudavajra.<sup>29)</sup> Marpa-Dopa obtained instructions on exposition of the Naropa's system from Kanaksri. He also studied tantra and other expositions under Nepalese Pandits Vagisvarakirti and Bodhibhadra. He also received many instructions from Siddha Vajrapani (Phyag-na), a disciple of Maitripa.

Jagadananda Jivabhadra of Patan is also mentioned as a famous Pandit in Deb-ther Snon po. He was a Pandit in the lineage of (Vajracharya) Kriyasamuccaya composed by Siddha Darpanacharya. His son Mahabodhi was also a known Pandit in the same lineage. It is said that Jam-dbyans Don-yod rgyal-mtshan obtained Samuccaya texts from a Nepalese merchant. At that time the book was not translated into Tibetan. When Lotsaba Ca-bzan- Pa bLo gros rgyal-mt San heard that mNa-ris-pa rdo-rje-dPal had obtained the initiation of Samucchaya in Kathmandu, he along with seven fellow Tibetan Buddhists came to Nepal to receive the initiation. They obtained complete initiation and permission to read the text from Pandit Mahabodhi.<sup>30)</sup>

Kayasri was another noted native scholar of tantra. He handed down the tantra of new class among the ancestors of dPyal Byun-gnas rgyal mtsan. He also handed down the precepts of the Nam-mkha-skor-gsum to him. The precepts represented a Pratyahara precept, which served as the path based on Sunyata. Kayasri obtained this precept from Sunyaratha (Ni-mai sin-rta).<sup>31)</sup>

Divakarachandra's (sTon-rid Tindzin) tantric secret name was Sunyata Samadhivajra. He belonged to a noble family in Kathmandu. He was the only son in the family. His family was associated with Yangal Vihara. He went to India and requested for ordination at Vikramsila Mahavihara. At that time,

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28) Roerich, Op cit, pp.227-228, p.325, p.729 and p.843.

29) Ibid, pp.383-384.

30) Ibid, pp.1045-1046.

31) Ibid, pp.1045-46.

the number of ordained monks at Vikramsila was complete. It had fixed number of 50 monks and 13 novices at a time. He then studied Sanskrit and logic. He also studied Samputa and Hevajra tantra under Nepalese Guru, Ratnasri. Later on, Divakarachandra became a reputed scholar. While in Nepal he met Pindapatika and requested him to confer upon the initiation. He repeatedly begged for precepts. Finally, Mahebhara and Divakarachandra were given initiation and bestowed on them the secret precepts. Divakarachandra requested the teacher to write down Sri Tattvajnana Siddi, Sarvartha Siddi Sadhananama and Sri Vajrayogini Homa Vidhi. He did not agree his request. Then Buddhadatta, a nephew of the teacher wrote Vajrayogini Homa Vidhi. The teacher also bestowed on Punyakarbhadra (Hamu dkarpo) the complete initiation and precepts. Guru Pindapatika visited Bodhgaya with Divakarachandra and other disciples. Then Divakarachandra practiced meditation for six years and obtained special faculties. He wrote several important texts on Buddhism. Some of his texts are *Zal-gnis-ma Che-ba'*, *Don-gsal-ma Che-ba*, *bDag-med-mai mnon-par-rtogs-pa*, *sPyan mai-nan-son yons-su sbyon-ba*, and *Kyei-rdo-rje dkyil khor-gyi cho-ga*.<sup>32)</sup>

Divakarachandra taught Varahi tantra to Punyakarbhadra. His name as a Buddhist scholar was Varendraruci. Similarly, he also taught the cycle of tantra to dPyal Kundga rdo-rje. He also taught Pramanavartika to Ban-phyug-ide. In Tara Nath's historical account, he is mentioned as a direct disciple of Naropa. In Tengyur, three tantric works are attributed to him.<sup>33)</sup>

Divakarachandra Nyayasri was another famous Pandit from Nepal. He was one of the teachers of sTenpa-Pa Lotsaba Tshul khrim byun-gnas.

Lama Tara Nath (Kun-dga-snin-po or Anandagarbha) refers Buddhasri as an eminent Buddhist scholar in his historical account (rGya-gar-chos-byun). He equated the Nepalese scholar with Mahapandit Sakya Sribhadra, Mahacharya Ratnarakshita, Jnanakaragupta, Buddhasrimitra, Sanghajnana, Ravisribhadra and Candrakaragupta. Buddha Sri was famous as one of the twenty-four great Mahantas. He also acted for a short time as the Sthavira of Mahasanghika at Vikramsila Mahavihara. It, to some extent defines his intelligentsia on Buddhism. After returning to Nepal, he extensively preached

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32) Ibid, pp.392-395.

33) Caööpadhyaya, Op cit, p.305.

Prajnaparamita and Guhyasamaj tantra.<sup>34)</sup>

Ratnaraksita, a great Mahasanghika tantric scholar at Vikramsila also fled to Nepal after the destruction of the Mahavihara by the Turk invaders. He had visualized many tutelary deities such as Cakrasamvara, Kalacakra and Yamari. In the mean time, the other Mahantas and great scholars went to the South-western part of India, Pu khan, Mu nan, Kambo-ja, Tibet, Jagaddala and Advisa.<sup>35)</sup> The arrival of Pandit Ratnarakshita certainly inspired Newar Buddhists to devote on learning and teaching Buddhism. No other details of his activities are found yet.

Mahapandit Santisribhadra (Bharo-the one handed) was an eminent Buddhist scholar of Nepal. A yogi named Rwa tu can said-<sup>36)</sup>

In this country of Nepal there are many Pandits such as the Indian Vajrapani, Phamthin pa and Bharo - the one handed...

This statement equates the 11th Century scholar with famous Indian Pandit Vajrapani and Vagisvarakirti of Vikramsila. He was the expert of Yamari tantra. He was trained under Mahasiddha Padmavajra. Later, Bharo rendered valuable services in the development of Buddhist scholarship in Nepal. He was given full ordination in the presence of Pandit Shantijnagarabha giving him the name of Mahapandit Shantibhadra (Bharo). After coming back to Nepal, he made an immense contribution on Buddhist tantric learning. He had both Newar and Tibetan disciples. Some of his prominent disciples were Kyo brothers, Rwa Lo Dorje trag, Gos-lo Sonam tsemo, Mal Lo Lodro tragpa, and Bari Lo Rinchen Tragpa. <sup>37)</sup>

Mahapandit Bharo lived at Chobhar with a large number of Newar Yogins. He taught tantra to learned Yogis. Bharo - the maimed hand is mentioned as a great scholar in Tibetan historical sources. During the 11th century, Nepal

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34) Ibid, pp.316-317.

35) Ibid, pp.317-319.

36) Roerich, Op cit.

37) Hubert Decler, <Theacred Biography of Bharo-Maimed hand, a Tenth Century Bajracharya from Nepal>, 《Buddha Jayanti Smarik 2051》, Souvenir of Buddha's Birthday Celebration, Oku Bahal, 1995, pp.100-101.

especially Yerang already became a popular destination of Tibetan Buddhists to study Buddhism. It is thus described<sup>38)</sup>

Numerous are the places full of wonder where the teacher set in motion the wheel of Dharma and where he set foot. Also residences of Panditas and Mahasiddhas, as well as cremation grounds where the heroes are Dakinis gotter, so that this Nepal valley is like an equivalent of the awe inspiring Khecari continent of the Dakinis.

Rwa Lotsaba (Vajrakirti) was a famous disciple of Bharo who studied tantra (Yamari, Vajravahini etc.) under him. He also received a large number of teachings on the Dharma from many other Newar Pandits and realized Yogins.

Mahakaruna (Thugs-rje-chen-po) was a very famous Newar scholar among the Tibetans. He was the disciple of another Nepalese scholar named Kanaka Sri. Many famous Tibetan Buddhists were trained under him. He is also referred to as Yerang ba in Debther Ngon-po.<sup>39)</sup> Pandit Mahakaruna gave teachings of exposition of the doctrine of Maitripa to Tibetan scholar Khon-phu-ba. Maitripa had several Tibetan Gurus. Later, he went to India for further studies. He became the Master of Guhyasamaja tantra according to the method of Nagarijuna, Yoga tantra, and Kalacakra tantra. He also studied Sarvatathagatatattva sangrahanama Mahayana Sutra, Vajrasekhara Mahaguhya Yoga tantra, Sriparamadya Mahayanakalparaja, Dohakosha giti and Vajradaka tantra. He was the Guru of great scholar Maitri-pa. Mahakaruna also translated three chapters of second half of the commentary of Sarvatathagatatattva Sangraha Mahayana Sutra Abhisamayana tantratattva Lokakarinama Vyakhya.<sup>40)</sup> Rwa Lotsaba attended Pandit Mahakaruna without fail while in Nepal. Rwa Lo extensively studied under him and became a very learned man. His training helped Rwa Lotsaba to

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38) Hubert Decler, <*Bajracharya Transmission in t Century Chobhar Bharo the Maimed Hand's Main Disciple Vajrakirti - the Translator from Rwa*>, 《*Buddhist Himalay, Vol. V D*》, Nos. 1 and 2, 1994-95, pp.1-4.

39) Roerich, Op cit, pp.360-361.

40) Ibid, p.355.

master in Samvara tantra, Vajradaka, Abhidhanottara tantra, Samputa tantra, Herukabhyudaya, Yoginicharya, Cakrasamvara, Vajrasattva Sadhana, Vajramahabhairav tantra, Vajrabhairavakalpa, Krishnanayamari tantra, Namasangiti, Vajrayogini Sadhana, Vajrayogini Tika, the cycle of Yamantaka, Dakini Sarvacittad Vayachintya Jnana, Vajravarahyabhihava tantra rajanama and Krishna Yamarikalpa. Rwa Lo translated some of the famous texts into Tibetan that include Samputa Tantra, Abhidhanottara Tantranama, Herukaabhyudaya, Sri Vajramahabhairavanama tantra, and Namasangiti.<sup>41)</sup> He paid huge amount of golden *Srans* (gold coins) to study each tantra. He invited the Guru to Tibet and offered 1000 golden *Srans* to him as gift at his return to Nepal. Till his death, he sent on thirty seven times offerings to him.<sup>42)</sup> Pandit Mahakaruna also taught Samvara tantra to Malgyo Lotsaba bLo-gros-grags.

Ratnakirti was a noted scholar of Nepal. He was affiliated to Vikramsila Mahavihara as a scholar. He also belonged to the spiritual lineage of Acharya Abhaya of Vajramala and Sri Sampuöatantraraja tika Nyayamjarina ma. Pandit Vanaratna bestowed both on Dharmaraja Grags-pa byun-nas-pa.<sup>43)</sup>

Ratnasri was another Buddhist Pandit of Samputa and Hevajra tantra. He taught those tantras to another Nepalese disciple Divakarachandra who later became a great scholar. It is said that he learnt Kalacakra tantra from Acharya Duskhor-ba.<sup>44)</sup> Chag Lotsaba obtained his help to translate some of the Buddhist texts into Tibetan.

Ravindradeva was a learned man from Svayambhu. He was the teacher of Chag Lotsaba. He taught him Buddhist tantra. Similarly, Chag-Lo also took lessons from Ratnakarasanti while he was in Nepal.<sup>45)</sup>

There are several popular beliefs relating to the Buddhist scholars of Nepal as well as Tibet. It is said that when Ven. Grags-rgyal died all the deities of Samvara family appeared on his skull and other signs occurred on his jaw, which are preserved in a Caitya in Tibet. Nepalese Pandit Ravindradeva

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41) Ibid, pp.33-34.

42) Ibid, pp.377-378.

43) Ibid.

44) Ibid, pp.760-762.

45) Roerich, Op cit, p.54.

indicated to Chag Lo that the Caitya had fallen in ruins. Later, Chag Lotsaba renovated the Caitya. Ravindradeva performed consecration ritual. It is said that a shower of rice grain fell at Teura in Tibet. The Caitya is known as *White Lightning Proof Caitya*.<sup>46)</sup>

Nepalese scholar Shantibhadra is also known as Dze-hum. Nag-tsho Lotsaba obtained help from Shantibhadra to translate several Sanskrit Buddhist texts into Tibetan. He was the Master of Guhyasamaja. He was one of the seventy teachers under whom Ven. Gos lhas btas (Gos Khug-Pa) studied tantra. In fact, Nepalese scholar Mahakaruna also taught tantra to him. Later, Shantibhadra taught tantric commentaries as well as hidden precepts of Gyi Jo Lotsaba (Zla ba od-zer) to his disciples. The Lotsaba also obtained many initiations.<sup>47)</sup> He had scholarly disciple named Krishnapada, who was the Guru of Tibetan scholar Marpa Dopa.

Pandit Silasagar was the expert of Bodhicharyavatara. He is referred to as the great Pandit in Tibetan historical sources.<sup>48)</sup> He trained Lotsaba dPyal Chos-Kyi bzan-Po in Bodhicittotpada based on the method of Bodhicharya-vatara. The Lotsaba himself was a great scholar of Hevajra tantra and Sadangayoga who wrote very famous book entitled- 'The Key to the Casket of Precious Stone' (Rinpoche sgom-gyi lde-mig).<sup>49)</sup>

Historians are of opinion that Sumatikirti was also a scholar from Nepal. He taught Buddhist doctrines to Tibetans.<sup>50)</sup> He helped Marpa Dopa to translate texts of Samvara tantra cycle into Tibetan.

Vibhuticandra was also a well-known Buddhist scholar from Nepal. He taught grammar to Tibetans. Once when he was teaching grammar to five disciples, a Yogin in black dress came there. The disciples informed the teacher about the event. The Pandit understood that the Yogin was no other than Sabari dBan Phyug. So, he requested the Yogin to bestow on him the Sadanga Yoga, the essence of all the tantras. The Yogin bestowed him the Yoga. He stayed there for 21 days and left for Kashmir. Then the Pandit

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46) Ibid, pp.1055-1056.

47) Ibid, pp.859-860: Ctopadhyaya, Op cit, p.305.

48) Roerich, Op cit, p.799.

49) Ibid, p.797.

50) Ibid, p.325.

asked Tibetans about the most famous Spiritual friend (Kalyanamitra). They referred the name of Ko-brag-pa. Vibhucicandra wrote to him that he possessed the profound precepts of Sabari dRan-Phyug and asked him to come to receive them. Ko-brag-pa dispatched suitable presents to the Pandit and his retinue. He also requested him to visit Tibet. As a matter of fact, Vibhucicandra visited Dingri and bestowed the hidden precepts on Ko-brag pa, dPyal A-mo-gha, gYun-Phug-Pa, Neg-Po Chos-ldan, and Mar-ston gYan bar.<sup>51)</sup>

In addition to these scholars, there were other Newar Buddhist scholars who had very good relations with Tibetans Buddhists. They were Sunayasri, Mahebharo, Silabharo, Bhadanta and Nepalese disciples of Atisa. Many Vajracharyas affiliated to various Vihara Samghas were also noted scholars in Nepal. Patan has produced many other reputed scholars. Amritananda, Gunananda and many others were also noted scholars of their time. Local Buddhist scholars were affiliated to the local Viharas. Many of them wrote, edited or translated Mahayana Vajrayana texts.<sup>52)</sup> However, in present times, the so called scholars lack professional and above all, the scholarly qualities.

Many Nepalese scholars are referred in Tibetan historical sources. In fact, all those who are mentioned in the Tibetan sources had certain kind of relationship with Tibetan Buddhists and contributed in the Buddhist scholarship of Tibet by providing training to them in secret precepts, doctrines, Sutra, tantra and other branches of Buddhism. Some of them visited to Tibet for the scholarly purposes. In addition to it, there were many other Newar scholars who are seldom mentioned in Tibetan sources. In fact, most of those scholars had no connection in Tibet. They lived in Nepal and remained active in Viharas. Some of them wrote excellent Charya songs. In fact, there were many Vajracharyas who wrote excellent Caca songs. Those songs have been regarded excellent work of Newar Buddhist scholars by the modern acholars of Buddhism. The Blue Annals, a Tibetan classical text mentions about Vajrayana tradition of Nepal. Since Newar Buddhist society has a glorious tradition of Buddhist scholarship, local Newar writers are often overwhelmed while dealing with the glorious past. Some authors have

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51) Ibid, p.796.

52) Hera Kazi Vajracharya, et. al, 《Yasodhara Mahavihara Sangha Chagu Adhyaya(A Study of Yasodhara Buddhist Monastery)》, Lalitpur: Yasodhara Mahavihara, 1995, pp.153-166.



compiled list of native scholars and highlighted them as the great Newar Buddhist scholars.<sup>53)</sup>

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53) Badri Ratna Vajracharya, 《*Nhapayapim Vajracharyapi (The Vajracharya Priests of Fortimes)*》, Kathmandu: Anandakuti Vihara Trust, 1989, pp.24-51; A).

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